

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00259 301610Z
ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0259

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

VALLETTA FOR MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG SF WA
SUBJ: NAMIBIA: PREPARING SWAPO FOR PROXIMITY TALKS

REF: (A) LUSAKA 251, (B) STATE 23830

SUMMARY. GUARDIAN CORRESPONDENT REPORTS THAT SWAPO
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EXECUTIVE IS DIVIDED ON APPROACH TO SAG TROOP PRESENCE
IN NAMIBIA; THIS QUESTION IS EXPECTED TO BE THRESHED OUT
AT MEETING OF EXECUTIVE THIS WEEK WITH THOSE FAVORING FLEXIBILITY
STANDING CHANCE OF CARRYING THE DAY; SWAPO RECOGNIZES PROXIMITY
TALKS AS CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT TO FUTURE OF SWAPO. SWAPO IS UNDER
PRESSURE FROM NYERERE AND NETO TO ENGAGE IN SERIOUS TALKS IN
NEW YORK. END SUMMARY.

1. WE WOULD LIKE TO CALL ATTENTION TO PIECE FILED BY JOHN BORRELL WHICH SHOULD HAVE APPEARED IN GUARDIAN OF JANUARY 30. BORRELL ARTICLE INDICATES POSSIBLE SWAPO FLEXIBILITY ON THE SA TROOP ISSUE WHICH GOES BEYOND THAT OF RAND DAILY MAIL CORRESPONDENT REFERRED TO IN REFTEL A. BORRELL IS A SERIOUS CORRESPONDENT AND HAS GOOD CONTACTS WITHIN SWAPO. CHARGE MET WITH BORRELL JANUARY 30 AND DISCUSSED BORRELL'S ANALYSIS OF LIKELY SWAPO POSITION IN NEW YORK.

2. BORRELL ARGUES IN HIS ARTICLE THAT THERE ARE MARKED DIFFERENCES WITHIN SWAPO EXECUTIVE OVER THE CORRECT SWAPO APPROACH TO THE QUESTION OF SA TROOPS. THE HARDLINERS (INCLUDING NUJOMA) INSIST ON TOTAL WITHDRAWAL. OTHERS WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE ARGUE THAT THE ONLY WAY OF THWARTING SOUTH AFRICAN PLANS FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IS TO ACCEPT THE PRESENCE OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF UN-SUPERVISED SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS IN THE TERRITORY DURING THE ELECTIONS. THESE MEMBERS OF SWAPO EXECUTIVE REALIZE THAT SA IS LOOKING FOR AN EXCUSE TO BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS AND GO FORWARD WITH THE INTERNAL SOLUTION. SA BELIEVES TROOP QUESTION IS APPROPRIATE EXCUSE AND SWAPO INTRANSIGENCE ON THIS ISSUE WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR SA TO PORTRAY SWAPO AS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BREAKDOWN. MODERATES SEE SWAPO FLEXIBILITY ON TROOP ISSUE AS MEANS TO EXTRACT CONCESSIONS FROM THE FIVE ON THE SIZE OF THE PROPOSED UN FORCE.

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3. BORRELL REPORTS THAT SWAPO IS UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM OTHER AFRICANS TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY AT PROXIMITY TALKS. HE WRITES NYERERE HAS URGED NUJOMA TO COMPROMISE ON THE TROOP QUESTION AND SUGGESTED THREE UN TROOPS TO ONE SOUTH AFRICAN SHOULD OFFER SUFFICIENT ASSURANCE. SWAPO ALSO IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM NETO TO MAKE CONCESSIONS. "NETO'S FEAR IS THAT THE INTERNAL OPTION WOULD PRODUCE A NAMIBIAN GOVERNMENT INCLINED TO SUPPORT SAVIMBI'S UNITA IN THE SOUTHERN HALF OF ANGOLA. HE ALSO FEARS THAT THE USE OF CUBAN TROOPS IN COOPERATION AGAINST UNITA COULD PROVIDE THE PRETEXT FOR THE RETENTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS ALONG HIS SOUTHERN BORDER."

4. BORRELL SAYS SWAPO WILL THRESH OUT POSITION ON SA TROOPS AT EXECUTIVE MEETING THIS WEEK IN LUSAKA AND THAT NUJOMA'S HARDLINE POSITION IS LESS ASSURED OF CARRYING THE DAY THAN IN THE PAST.

5. IN TALKING WITH BORRELL IT BECAME CLEAR THAT HIS SOURCES WITHIN SWAPO EXECUTIVE CONSISTS OF ONE PERSON WHO HE DECLINED TO IDENTIFY. HE WAS FIRM IN STATING THAT HIS REPORT ACCURATELY REFLECTED HIS SOURCE'S APPRECIATION OF WHAT IS HAPPENING WITHIN THE SWAPO EXECUTIVE. WHEN ASKED SPECIFICALLY ABOUT PRESSURE FROM NETO, HE SAID THIS WAS EXACTLY WHAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY

HIS SOURCES. BORRELL SAID THE SWAPO MODERATES WERE THINKING IN TERMS OF DEMANDING THAT SA TROOPS BE OUTNUMBERED FIVE TO ONE BY UN FORCES.

6. COMMENT: AS NOTED ABOVE, H. BORRELL IS A SERIOUS CORRESPONDENT WHO IS WELL PLUGGED IN AT SWAPO. WE BELIEVE HE IS ACCURATELY REPORTING WHAT HIS SOURCES TOLD HIM. WE WOULD BE MORE CONFIDENT OF THE VERACITY OF HIS REPORT IF HE HAD NOT BEEN LIMITED TO ONE SOURCE. HIS ASSESSMENT IS LESS PESSIMISTIC THAN OUR (REFTEL A), BUT WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO BE PROVEN WRONG. HIS REPORT ON NETO PRESSURE ON SWAPO, IF TRUE, POINTS UP THE NEED TO GET TO NETO AS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL B. WE HAVZ BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM THAT THE SWAPO EXECUTIVE WILL IN FACT MEET IN LUSAKA THIS WEEK. WHEN ASKED, OUR SWAPO SOURCES BECOME VAGUE, BUT WE SUSPECT THAT
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MEETING MAY WELL TAKE PLACE. IF IT WERE AT ALL POSSIBLE TO DO SO, GETTING OUR PROPOSALS INTO SWAPO'S HANDS BEFORE OR DURING THE MEETING COULD PROVE OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE.
CLINGERMAN

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